

ABOUT GROWTH

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Providing financial and technical resources to build livable and sustainable communities

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Renton offers 'rapid review' for permits

By Rebecca Lind, Principal Planner, and Don Erickson, AICP, Senior Planner
City of Renton

Regionally recognized for a streamlined permitting process, the City of Renton is also well known for proactive economic development efforts.

In the fall of 1998, SECO Development Inc. presented a mixed-use office/residential redevelopment concept to the Renton City Council for Southport, an area along the shores of Lake Washington. Formerly the site of a steam-powered electrical generating plant, the 17-acre parcel abuts the Renton Boeing Plant and Coulon Beach Park.

SECO needed a decision on land use and environmental review within nine months in order to secure financing and exercise an option to purchase the site. The city was able to facilitate a rapid review by combining growth management and environmental requirements and by designating planned actions under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).

During an intensive six-month review process, the Renton City Council changed the comprehensive plan designation for the site from Industrial to Center Office Residential, amended the zoning code, and adopted a planned action ordinance. The city prepared a combined comprehensive plan and supple-

mental environmental impact statement (EIS) to cover all of these actions.

The city discovered that the designation of planned actions under SEPA is an effective way to consolidate SEPA and land use review if the environmental analysis includes sufficient project-level detail. The city then analyzed thresholds for maximum building sizes, heights, numbers of units, and a specific list of uses in the EIS and approved them in the planned action ordinance. Subsequent projects that comply with these thresholds are only required to go through an administrative site plan review process without additional environmental analysis or additional approvals by the city hearing examiner.

The planned action approach saved both time and money for the city and the project proponents. Consolidating the city's comprehensive plan amendment with the planned action EIS saved six months in getting these documents approved. Eliminating multiple project environmental reviews, future hearing examiner review, and potential appeals also reduced processing time.

Early support of the concept by the city council created the political certainty necessary to assist the developer in securing financing and positioning for future tenants. Staff carried out their reviews confidently, knowing the council supported the project. By using a planned action EIS, the city

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A major redevelopment project, offices with adjacent residential apartments, is being constructed in Renton along Lake Washington.

ILLUSTRATION / WRIGHT RUNSTAD & COMPANY

ABOUT GROWTH

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About Growth features topics that are of high interest and strives to reflect a wide range of views from various perspectives. The views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily OCD's opinions or positions.

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Solving the permit controversy



By **Shane Hope, AICP**
 Managing Director, Growth Management Program, OCD

Permits for development can be controversial. For instance, have you ever heard:

- Developers complain that getting permits is complicated or takes too long?
- Local governments complain they don't have enough information or staff to make fast permit decisions?
- Environmental organizations complain that cumulative effects of projects are not considered when permits are issued?
- Neighborhood groups complain that their local officials allow projects that generate too much traffic or otherwise affect their quality of life?

In Washington, permits are subject to various state laws, including the Growth Management Act, the State Environmental Policy Act, and the Shoreline Management Act. Because each of these laws has a different focus, process, and set of timelines, meeting all of them has often been challenging.

In 1995 regulatory reform legislation helped combine these laws to make permitting somewhat more streamlined and predictable. Gradually, people are getting used to the reforms and are taking advantage of new possibilities.

This publication features several communities that have used the reforms to make development permitting faster, based on good up-front information about the environment, infrastructure, cultural resources, and other local concerns. Some of these projects were also featured in a "Planning for Development" workshop sponsored by the Washington State Office of Community Development (OCD) in early December.

Local and state efforts are resulting in faster, more predictable permit decisions that are environmentally responsible. How to do this in more communities is a subject of great interest. While the main requirement is to have detailed planning and clear regulations done in advance of projects, the greatest constraint is usually lack of resources to do the job.

However, the stories in this publication provide inspiration and ideas. In addition, the

state Growth Management Program can provide technical assistance. (For example, if you want a copy of the notebook given to attendees of the "Planning for Development" workshop, please call us at 360-725-3000.)

For the future, other creative options are possible, too. The Governor has included in his budget a proposal to help OCD and the Washington State Office of Trade and Economic Development launch a "QuickSites" program. For both the public and private sectors, finding ways to make permitting faster and more predictable, while encouraging sustainable development in urban growth areas, is a critical task.

Definitions

These are a few of the planning and State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) terms used in this issue of *About Growth*. Please call the Growth Management Program at 360-725-3059 if you would like more information on these or other terms.

Mixed-use

Development of a tract of land or building with two or more different uses – such as office, residential, retail, public, or entertainment – in a compact urban form. Mixed-use developments maximize efficient use of public facilities and services; provide a variety of housing types and densities; reduce the number of automobile trips and encourage alternative modes of transportation; and create a safe, attractive, and convenient environment for living, working, recreating, and traveling.

Nonproject environmental impact statement

An environmental impact statement (EIS) on policies, plans, programs, development regulations, and similar documents under SEPA. A nonproject EIS is usually less detailed than a project EIS. It is sometimes called a programmatic EIS.

Planned action

A SEPA term referring to the designation of types of development projects whose impacts have been addressed in an EIS associated with a plan for a specific geographic area before individual projects are actually proposed. Planned actions are designated by local ordinance and need to be located in an urban growth area. Projects qualifying as planned actions are relieved from certain SEPA procedures (see RCW 43.21C.031).

City joins state and federal agencies to enhance an important waterfront area

By Jeanne Robinette
Councilmember, City of Anacortes

Could the leaders of the City of Anacortes, a community of 15,000 nestled along one of the most beautiful waterfront locations on Puget Sound, sit down with county, federal, and state agencies and develop a plan for Fidalgo Bay that would meet environmental and economic goals?

Could they negotiate a plan that would combine growth management, shoreline, and environmental requirements? Could they develop a Fidalgo Bay subarea plan, along with a memorandum of understanding and a programmatic environmental impact statement, that would allow the city to make wise, local decisions?

As a member of the Anacortes City Council who spent years working on the project, I say: "Yes. We did it – almost."

Fidalgo Bay presented a number of problems for the city and interested agencies to address as the subarea plan was developed.

Anacortes was founded by early settlers intent on harvesting trees, fish, shellfish, copper, and even sand for making glass. We had an incredible deep-water port. It was an environmental free-for-all a century ago. The town site was logged, docks were built, streets planked, and industries built on pilings over the water. Millions of salmon were canned throughout the years. The bay was full of log booms.

When I first discovered Anacortes in 1960, the primary industries were declining. Land use planning was hardly born.

When I returned in 1990, more than 100 acres of land adjacent to or fronting on navigable water in the downtown were idle awaiting redevelopment. A bevy of landowners were ready to begin. But by this time the Growth Management Act (GMA), Shoreline Management Act (SMA), and State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) had become law and needed to be considered by the city.

In 1996 the Washington State Office of Community Development awarded a grant of \$105,000 to the city. This funding,

along with the work of interested local, federal, and state agencies, created the integrated *Fidalgo Bay Waterfront Subarea Plan and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement*.

Our method sounds simple, but it was awesome. On a monthly basis we sat together around a table at the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife in Mill Creek and made detailed decisions that led to policy agreement. We assembled all the data about our bay we could find on one map. (I learned that shared data is a great thinking tool.) In Anacortes, environmentalists and developers challenged the data from different perspectives. Citizens saw the logic of the policies proposed for adoption.

This took years. Our approved, integrated plan includes an Eelgrass Demonstration Project, which will allow us to find out how to grow eelgrass in our bay. Our biggest local hurdle was an upland issue, whether to allow a new commercial center on uplands south of downtown. Manufacturing and marine/tourist commercial were allowed there

instead. Environmental activists and developers both approved our plan, including our no-net-loss habitat policy.

In December 1999 we adopted our Fidalgo Bay Plan. In December 2000 an update of our Shoreline Master Plan passed agency muster. Ordinances allow for development agreements within the context of the zoning, giving developers predictability, and providing incentives and up-front standards to preserve views and public access to the water, while honoring private property rights. A building for the dry-stack storage of boats has received agency approval. (This is a building on the uplands where boats are stacked out of the water on shelves, entering the water only when in use.)

Earlier, I said, "We did it – almost." The "almost" refers to our next step, our recently completed restoration plan, with 34 opportunities to clean up pollution from earlier uses. The city is awaiting agency approval.

We can live with GMA/SMA/SEPA. Anacortes is a beautiful place. I'm not leaving again.

QuickSites Initiative

By Peter Riley, AICP, Senior Planner, OCD

The QuickSites Initiative is a proposal for a state program to help communities, developers, port districts, and others prepare and market sites for targeted types of industrial development.

Under this approach, people can use community and site assessment tools to survey system-wide and site-specific physical, demographic, environmental, social, economic, fiscal, and quality-of-life infrastructure. Comparing this information to industry siting profiles, they would be able to identify industries they are most capable of supporting. Site profiles will be collected and maintained in a centralized, web-accessible, geographic database.

Communities and sites that are prepared for their "best-fit" industries – where the broad range of infrastructure is in place and environmental impacts are minimal or mitigated – will have a competitive edge

when it comes to attracting business. Where a best-fit is not apparent, site proponents will be able to pinpoint exactly when and where investments need to be made in order to become competitive. Proper preparation through planning, investment, and environmental review will also allow proponents to promise significantly faster permitting, so important in this fast-paced economy.

The Governor's recently released budget for the state fiscal year 2002 (July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002) calls for a small appropriation to develop industry profiles and a database.

For further information, contact Peter Riley, Office of Community Development at 360-725-3059; Peter McMillin, Office of Trade and Economic Development at 360-725-5072; Scott Boettcher, Department of Ecology at 360-407-7564; or Sheila Martin, Office of Financial Management at 360-902-0675.

Doing environmental review up-front

By Bill Trimm, AICP

Director of Community Development, City of Mill Creek

The City of Mill Creek received \$135,000 from the state Growth Management Planning and Environmental Review Fund (PERF) to prepare a subarea plan that is integrated with a detailed environmental impact statement (EIS).

The purpose of the integrated document is to define environmental impacts and mitigation measures at the comprehensive planning stage instead of the project stage. The intent of the combined subarea plan/EIS is to give the city the ability to assess development-related impacts against pre-established environmental thresholds. This way, appropriate measures to mitigate impacts can be determined.

By conducting detailed environmental review as a part of the subarea planning process, more certainty and predictability is provided to the public and private sectors during the development review process.

The *SR 527 Corridor Subarea Plan and Supplemental EIS* was prepared for a 157-acre area adjacent to the city's newly planned Town Center. The subarea is an elongated vacant area, containing 25 separate ownerships that were not provided with urban services. The subarea is bounded by State Route 527, scheduled for improvement and widening, and by North Creek and its critical environmental wildlife habitat. The subarea is a primary entrance corridor and gateway to the city and its newly planned Town Center.

The objectives of the downtown plan are to:

- Expedite economic development in the city's core area by providing residences within walking distance to the Town Center.
- Protect the critical areas of North Creek while using it to enhance the livability of adjacent developments.
- Reduce vehicular trips and impacts on SR 527 by providing an effective mix of land uses within close proximity to each other.

- Minimize development permit processing time.

Based on a planning process that relied heavily on public participation and detailed environmental analysis, the city worked with its consultants and a citizen advisory committee to prepare three alternative land use plans. These alternatives were evaluated in a draft supplemental EIS. Following public workshops and hearings, the committee recommended a preferred alternative for the final subarea plan. To truly combine the subarea plan and environmental analysis, the city organized the document to include:

- Policies formatted to fit both required and optional Growth Management Act elements.
- A summary matrix in the final EIS that established

impact thresholds and corresponding mitigation measures.

- Two new zoning districts to carry out the plan's directives for mixed-use compact developments.
- Design guidelines that focus on pedestrian streetscapes with multimodal connections to transit stops and the Town Center.
- A fiscal impact analysis.
- A planned action ordinance.

From initiation to adoption, the planning process took 22 months. Immediately following subarea plan adoption, the city received a conditional use application for a major sewer trunk line from the Silver Lake Water and Sewer District to provide service to the entire subarea. Since the impacts of the sewer trunk line were already assessed and mitigation measures established in the subarea plan, the conditional use permit was reviewed and approved quickly.

Following approval of the sewer line, the city received binding site plan applications for three separated compact residential neighborhoods that would be connected to the Town Center via a new Main Street. All applications were reviewed and found to qualify as planned actions and were conditioned consistent with the subarea plan policies, design guidelines, and EIS impact and mitigation matrix. Each project was approved within 120 days.

These three projects will bring 775 new residential units within walking distance to the Town Center. Two of the three projects are under currently under construction.

The approval of the three compact residential neighborhoods within walking distance to downtown provided the launching pad for the Town Center. In May 2000 the city approved the Master Development Plan for the first phase of the Town Center. It included 233,000 square feet of mixed-use office, retail, and public uses.

We found that the PERF process enabled the city to prepare and carry out a subarea plan with sufficient environmental, design, and regulatory detail to provide certainty to development applicants, city staff, and the general public.

PHOTOS / RITA R. ROBISON



Above: Mill Creek looked at area-wide environmental impacts while developing plans for the compact, pedestrian-oriented neighborhood near its new Town Center. Below: A pedestrian-bicycle trail is provided at the edge of the wetland buffer in Mill Creek's Town Center and adjacent neighborhood.

From timber dependent to economic independence

By Donna Murphy, Grants Coordinator, and
Lara Thomas, Assistant Planner
City of Sultan

For much of the 20th century, many of the residents of the City of Sultan, a community of 2,955 east of Monroe, were timber workers. Ten years ago, the state identified Snohomish County as one of the counties hardest hit by industry declines.

Ironically, as Sultan suffered out-migration of people and jobs associated with the timber industry, the city has – at the same time – experienced the growing pains of becoming a bedroom community of the Everett and Seattle areas. Residential construction in 1999 increased more than 3000 percent over 1992.

To cope with these changing circumstances, Sultan began its growth management planning in 1991 with an exercise to identify the community's strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities. The city began developing public improvements to stabilize and diversify its economy. Since 1992, the city has spent millions in grant, loan, and local dollars on improvements to street, park, sewer, and water facilities and on a new community center that houses the library and city administration offices.

To encourage the creation of family wage jobs for the growing population, Sultan is developing a master plan for a 300-acre industrial site identified in the comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance, about one mile east of the city center.

The plan will be based on extensive environmental review under the State

At open houses and stakeholder meetings, citizens are giving input on Sultan's industrial park plan.



PHOTOS / DONNA MURPHY

Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). The final integrated plan/environmental impact statement will speed up development approval time by establishing environmental thresholds within which development can occur. Thresholds will be determined by comparing the capacity of the natural and built environments to anticipated impacts of likely types of development. Related mitigation strategies will become the basis for development permits. Projects whose impacts fall within the thresholds and are consistent with the mitigation strategies can be permitted with few or no additional requirements.

Instead of preparing a traditional environmental impact statement (EIS) to evaluate the plan after it is proposed, the city is using the SEPA review process to create the plan. In a test of the state Department of Ecology's new nonproject review form, the city will complete several versions of the form throughout the planning process. Documenting environ-

mental considerations along with the development of the plan will save time and cost less than a traditional EIS.

City planners are working with a committee of stakeholders to prepare land use and transportation options for the area. In addition to these monthly meetings, the city holds regular technical meetings with the Washington State Departments of Transportation and Ecology, Offices of Community Development and Trade and Economic Development (OCD and OTED), the fire district, and Snohomish County. It also hosts open houses to obtain input from the public.

Last fall, Sultan received \$60,000 from OCD and OTED for Phase 1 of the industrial development project. Property profiles, a market analysis, and a traffic study of the SR 2 corridor were prepared.

The two offices recently awarded an additional \$75,000 for Phase 2 of Sultan's industrial development project. Sultan will compile the economic, environmental, and transportation analyses for the Industrial Park Master Plan.

"This grant funding will enable Sultan to plan for and develop new business and employment opportunities for our citizens," said Mayor C.H. Rowe. "The funding of this project will save participating property owners a good deal of time and money when they go to get permits for development."



Citizens are reviewing each phase of the industrial park plan.

Creating a hometown for the future

By Charlene Anderson, AICP
Senior Planner, City of Kent

In 1996 the City of Kent received a \$160,000 grant from the state Growth Management Planning and Environmental Review Fund (PERF). Based on a historically strong commitment to its downtown, Kent used the funding to develop a subarea plan called the *Strategic Downtown Action Plan*.

The goals of the downtown plan are: 1) to encourage downtown growth and redevelopment; 2) to create a stronger community identity and civic/commercial focus; and 3) to streamline permit review by combining environmental and growth management planning requirements for project proposals in downtown Kent.

The seeds of the PERF-funded subarea plan have sprouted many accomplishments, including:

- Location and design parameters for the commuter rail station.
- Design guidelines to create a vibrant, pedestrian-connected, mixed-use downtown community.
- Creation of gateways into downtown.
- Aggregation of properties that will provide a way to carry out the downtown vision.

In addition, a renewed excitement about the future of downtown Kent is occurring. The downtown plan has brought together various groups – including the Kent Downtown Partnership, Kent City Council, and city administration and staff – to carry out the action plan.

The downtown plan recommends that public and private interests work together to achieve safe, attractive, and convenient transportation systems, improved parks and open space, and adequate public facilities.

The downtown plan is a supplement to the Kent Comprehensive Plan. The downtown plan and supplemental environmental impact statement (SEIS) were prepared under 1995 state provisions that allow the combination of growth management and environmental requirements. The nonproject SEIS addresses the probable significant

environmental impacts in greater detail related to the specific recommended actions in the downtown plan.

The City of Kent chose not to designate planned actions in the downtown area until adequate downtown street standards, revised design guidelines, and historic preservation measures were adopted.

Public participation was key in preparing and adopting the downtown plan. Seven workshops for the public and seven meetings of the Downtown Stakeholders Task Force were offered. Public comments were received and reviewed throughout the process.

The guidelines in the downtown plan express the community vision for mixed-use neighborhoods. Within these neighborhoods, the guidelines emphasize maintaining and enhancing the pedestrian character of the streets, moderating the scale of downtown buildings, and providing abundant vegetation and unpaved

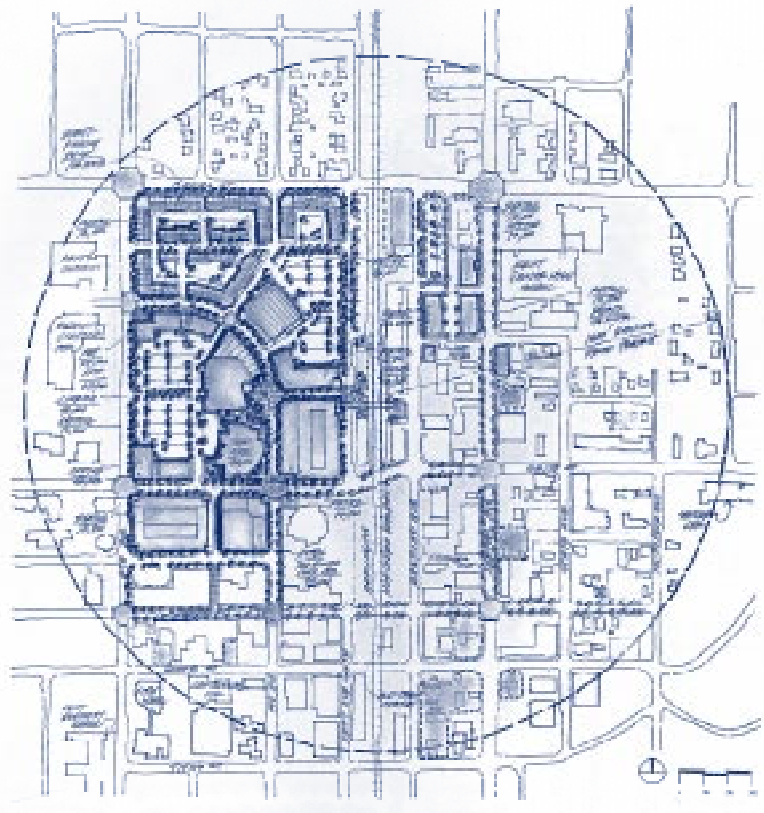
surfaces to absorb stormwater and clean the air.

Since its adoption, the downtown plan has triggered a number of additional important city actions, including:

- Preparing downtown design guidelines that will help carry out the community vision of the downtown as an active, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use district.
- Assembling properties near the commuter rail station for transit-oriented development.
- Evaluating development options near the rail station through the *Commuter Rail Station Area Study*.
- Revising zoning and street standards.
- Completing park and trail connections to the Green River corridor.
- Undertaking gateway design projects.

Kent Station Area

The Kent Station area will play an important role in the development of Kent's downtown.



SEPA: The nonproject initiative

By Marvin Vialle, Pam Sparks-McConkey,
and Patricia Betts

Washington State Department of Ecology

Have you ever completed a State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) checklist for a GMA comprehensive plan, policy, or other nonproject action and had the feeling that its only purpose was to fulfill a procedural requirement and added little or nothing to better decisions?

If the answer is yes, you're not alone. The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) has identified two components of nonproject analysis that need revision: SEPA procedures and the environmental analysis format.

Feasibility studies-pilot projects

Prior to formally proposing revisions, Ecology is currently testing possible rule changes for analyzing governmental approvals of plans, policies, programs, and regulations (RCW 34.05.313). Six pilots, representing a cross section of such nonproject actions, are underway using a new process and a nonproject review form to replace the current nonproject checklist and environmental analysis process.

Results from these pilots will help identify if the proposed process and form are workable and meet the objectives of: 1) combining proposals and environmental analysis; 2) streamlining the environmental analysis process; 3) improving public involvement; and 4) providing a format that assists decision makers. Suggestions from the pilot agencies are being used to revise and refine the proposed process as appropriate.

Process

The process and nonproject review form being tested are designed to ensure that the appropriate level of environmental analysis is done at the proper time and is documented to reduce later costs and time delays. Under this process, the nonproject review form goes through several iterations, with an early iteration replacing the current scoping notice. The scope is adjusted throughout the process based on public involvement, new information, and analysis. When a draft proposal is ready for formal public review and comment, it would be accompanied by a final iteration of the nonproject review form and a threshold determination.

Status

Rule adoption is anticipated in the spring of 2001. After adoption, Ecology plans to continue working to conduct training across the state to introduce both the process and the form, provide guidance, and explain any new tools.

For more information, call Marvin Vialle at 360-407-6928, email: mvia461@ecy.wa.gov, or see Ecology's web page: www.wa.gov/programs/sea/sepa/npifocus.htm.

Renton offers 'rapid review' for permits

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estimates an overall savings of approximately 12 months for project review compared with a typical process.

"Redevelopment of this site benefits the community in a number of different ways," said Renton Mayor Jesse Tanner. "This new, mixed-use waterfront development will create new employment opportunities, increase our tax base, and add to our current housing mix." The project transforms an unused industrial site into an attractive new development benefiting the public with amenities such as a shoreline promenade and public plaza along the waterfront.

Citizens were involved in the public hearings for the comprehensive plan and zoning review, as well as the supplemental EIS. During meetings for the draft supplemental EIS, the public was invited to identify areas to be addressed in the analysis.

The planned action ordinance was adopted in November 1999. Phase 1 of the development is currently under construction by SECO and includes 188 residential units, 8,077 square feet of retail, and 332 parking spaces. Phase 2 of the development, proposed by Wright Runstad & Company, is under active permit review. This phase proposes a 750,000 square-foot office complex, 10,000 square feet of restaurant space, and structured parking for 1,850 vehicles.

Nominees sought for downtown awards

The Washington State Office of Trade and Economic Development is accepting nominations for the annual Excellence in Downtown Revitalization Awards.

Award categories include Outstanding Public Partner, Outstanding Achievement in Promotion, Outstanding Design Project, Business Success Story, Best Economic Restructuring Story, and Outstanding Special Project.

To be eligible, all projects and activities need to have taken place or have been completed between January 1, 2000, and March 1, 2001. Nominations are open to all communities participating in the Downtown Revitalization Program's Tier System Network.

If your community is not currently a member of the Tier System, or if you're not sure, contact Susan Kempf with the Downtown Revitalization Program at 360-725-4056. Application materials are also available by calling this number.

The deadline for submitting applications is April 3, 2001. Awards will be presented May 2-4, 2001, during the Fifteenth Annual Downtown Revitalization Training Institute in Walla Walla.

Up-front environmental review part of downtown redevelopment effort

By Chad Eiken, AICP
Planning Review Supervisor, City of Vancouver

When Esther Short donated a four-block park to the City of Vancouver in 1855 with the stipulation that it always be a city park, neither she nor city leaders could foresee that the area would slip into decline.

Once the historic center of downtown Vancouver, the Esther Short Park, became isolated from the downtown by abandoned industrial properties. The area around it was known in recent decades for its vacant and dilapidated buildings, vagrancy, and crime.

Subarea plan and EIS

In 1996 Vancouver began an effort to reestablish Esther Short Park as the downtown's center. The city prepared a 20-year redevelopment plan that outlined a vision for the park and the area surrounding it. The plan anticipates development of 1,010 residential units and 540,000 square feet of commercial space, with 2,700 new jobs in a revitalized 24-hour-a-day city center.

The city's environmental impact statement (EIS) took into account potential environmental impacts from the maximum anticipated development in the 30-block area. By preparing an EIS for future development, the city "built a box" for uses, density, design standards, and range of acceptable environmental impacts. This "front-loaded" environmental review for the area provides certainty to developers

and the public that environmental issues have already been addressed.

Following public workshops, the Esther Short Subarea Plan and EIS were approved and became part of the city's comprehensive plan in January 1998.

Use of a planned action ordinance

To carry out the *Esther Short Subarea and Redevelopment Plan*, a planned action ordinance was adopted later in 1998. The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) authorizes the ordinances, which allow for expedited project permitting when planning and environmental review has been done in advance for an area.

Under a planned action ordinance, a project found to be consistent with the subarea plan and EIS in terms of uses, density, and potential impacts does not generally require further SEPA review. This saves developers the up-front time and expense of having to prepare an environmental analysis for their project and reduces review time by as much as 30 days.

Results already seen

Esther Short subarea project developers have stated that the predictability provided by up-front planning and environmental analysis, and the expedited review process, were key factors in their decisions to invest in Vancouver's downtown.

The subarea is on its way to becoming a vibrant, central gathering place for the community, as well as the centerpiece for several large-scale, mixed-use projects.

Three major mixed-use projects are under construction or already constructed,

with 426 residential units, 215,000 sq. ft. of office space, 40,000 sq. ft. of retail space, and structured parking for 1,259 vehicles. Two projects are across the street from Esther Short Park, which has undergone public improvements, including a pavilion and civic plaza now under construction. A convention center and hotel are planned for a four-block site on another side of the park. Public events in the park – such as a wine and jazz festival, weekly concerts, and a farmer's market – are bringing new life to this once-neglected part of downtown.

Continuing education opportunity offered

The Washington Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA) and the Puget Sound Section of APA are cosponsoring the annual Planning Law Conference Friday, March 30, 2001, at the Howard Johnson Plaza Hotel in Everett.

Proposed sessions include Case Law, the Endangered Species Act (ESA), Hearings Boards, Brownfields, Planned Action Environmental Impact Statements, Programmatic Approaches to the State Environmental Policy Act, Water Rights, Tribal Law, Concurrency, the Shoreline Management Act, Defensible Decisions and Reports, and Takings Issues under the ESA.

For additional information, please call Lori Peckol at 425-556-2411 for details.



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